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Surgeon General's Dental Corps Birthday Message

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By Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, U.S. Navy surgeon general, and chief, U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery



The Dental Corps was established 102 years ago. On August 22, the Dental Corps will celebrate a birthday, and I want to take a moment to recognize the men and women who make up their corps.

The Dental Corps epitomizes readiness and value. I have served on shore, on ship, and in the remote jungles with our dental shipmates and always appreciate the professional and dedicated care they provide.

Our dental shipmates provide dental health and prevention with amazing precision and when (for

me it is always on a week-end) a crisis flares they are there to make the difference. The Dental Corps has proven itself in war and in peace, and in more than one occasion has been called upon to help make a difference in mass casualty or overwhelming natural disaster.

I recall when I was the commanding officer at Naval Hospital Pensacola and the dental commands were disestablished and folded into the general medical commands. The grace and elegance of the dental commanding officer at the time impressed me greatly and I knew that leveling the playing field would find the DC leading MTF's and regions as well as senior operational assignments. I knew that with the caliber of officers and the mission dedication of the Dental Corps leaders they would soon start assuming control and leadership positions throughout Navy Medicine. It's been proven time and time again now as the Dental Corps commanding officer's, the Dental Corps O-6's and flag officers have commanded large pieces of the enterprise.

I have always been impressed with the fact that our Dental Corps personnel are always making the best and the most effective recommendations for dental care. They don't do things extravagantly but they do everything that's necessary to ensure that their mission is successful and always focused on the readiness of our Sailors and Marines. That's what I really appreciate about the care they provide. I think that if you ever want somebody to pay attention to detail on any project or mission, get a dentist involved in the mix and you don't have to worry. They are focused on details and getting the job done .

So Happy Birthday and congratulations to the men and women of our Dental Corp who make

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the difference when it counts.

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